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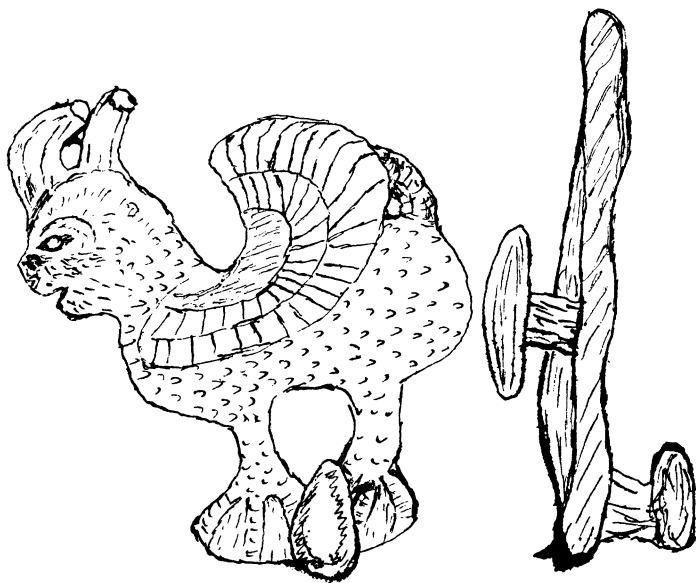
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BRIEF NOTES

A Babylonian belt buckle

HEREWITH is given a specimen of phantastic zoology, which I found in the possession of a dealer. It is $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. high and $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. broad, made of copper (not bronze), and from the metal composition may be dated about 3000 B. C. It came from Bagdad, and was encrusted by patina and dirt to three times its original thickness. I boiled it in a watery solution of copper



sulphate to remove the dirt. It then appeared evidently to be the left piece of a lady's fancy belt buckle. The back bears a T-shaped projection similar to a modern cuff button. Evidently a leather strip for the belt had a longitudinal slit on the end like a button-hole. The buckle was put in and turned at right angles to the strip. Between the horns and also between the tail and wings are holes for additional fastening by sewing. The front bears on the bottom a hook to catch the hole of the

right-side piece. The specimen is a flat plastic representation of a demon looking upward. The face resembles that of a dog, transformed to a partly human character, like that of a bulldog. The head bears two short goat horns curved backward. The body is that of a quadruped. It bears wings of unnatural curvature and without joints, of the style known from the later Assyrian art. The feathers are arranged in three rows as common in winged old-Egyptian and old-Babylonian representations. The feathers show the correct direction of the axis, as common in the oldest Babylonian art, as against the feather representation of the later Assyrian age, which shows an unnatural axis. The tail is curved up, and its end is covered by the wing and so invisible. The legs bear no real feet but only bird toes. The right part of the belt buckle may have repeated the same demon in symmetrical arrangement, together with possibly a middle piece, perhaps a tree or fruit. This buckle is a specimen of jewelry of people of higher class, but in comparison with the stoneware of the plainer people, it is less true to nature through the influence of syncretism and symbolism.

Since the above was written the specimen has been purchased by Colonel Fridtjev Anderson, of the Norwegian army, now on duty in this country, and presented by him to the Metropolitan Museum.

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